

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

November 11, 2024

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, November 11, 2024.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 6:00 PM.

In attendance were Supervisor Bruce Petersen, Clerk Amy Skewes, Treasurer Betsy Smith and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Fink, John Ollila and Keith Wanhaaho as stated by roll call.

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:

Old Business – Gaffney Road, bids for fire truck closed 11/7

A motion was made by Ollila, seconded by Fink to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Anderson to approve Oct. 14, 2024 meeting minutes. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.

Approval of the Bills:

A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Wanhaaho to approve the bills as audited. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.

Review Clerk's Report:

- The election went well, there were 1976 township voters
- I would like to thank this current board for their years of service, I have learned a lot from each one of you and I enjoyed serving with you all

Review Treasurer's Report:

- **Township Elected Officials Transition:** I want to acknowledge and thank the exiting members of our township board for their many years of dedication and service to the township.
- **ARPA reporting update from Supervisor?** Can this be completed prior to the elected officials' transition as previously planned before deadlines if needed? What are the deadlines?
- **BSA Transition:** BSA training shed light on issues w/onboarding and initial training. Working w/BSA to remedy these issues to get yearend totals into place. More training is set up November 12-15 from 9am to 3pm, the Clerk may use this time as well for some topics in the afternoons.
- **Transition of leadership:**
 - The existing elected officials, deputies, and office manager/water clerk have created a transition document in the P drive to help track tasks in the transition of leadership
 - Prior elected officials' potential to remain on payroll as needed for consulting (done in prior Treasurer transition) and continuation of Zoning Administrator

- **RD accounts:** see balances on the next page

Review Zoning Administrator's Report for (October 2024)

ZONING APPLICATIONS:

10/9 – 30498 Tapiola Road, new home, approved. 10/15 – 33254 Paavola Road, covered deck, approved. 10/22 – 46706 U.S.41, new sauna, approved. 10/24 – 17355 Donken Tapiola Road, storage building, approved.

10/30 – 18020 N Lake Avenue, new garage, approved.

INQUIRIES & COMPLAINTS:

10/2 – Received a zoning application from Chassell!!, 10/4 – What is the procedure to merge lots, 10/7 – Request for county to ditch the E side of Green Acres, 10/7 – Report of illegal building on Donken Tapiola Road, 10/14 – Rules for setbacks in FF near Tapiola, 10/15 – Permitting procedure for sauna along Portage Lake, 10/16 – Is it permitted to build a house near Up & Running on M-26, 10/22 – Is a permit required to put a roof over an existing deck, 10/22 – Are rules for a sauna different whether or not it has electricity and plumbing, 10/24 – Can a mobile home be placed on a double lot in #2 Location, 10/25 – Can a slab for a future garage be poured a year ahead of starting to build, 10/29 – Permitting rules for new home site on Tapiola Road.

OTHER ZONING ACTIVITIES:

Couple conversations with MTA for guidance about inconsistencies in the Zoning Ordinance. Met with new assessor to discuss zoning/assessing coordination. Prep for December Planning Commission meeting.

Correspondence:

State of Michigan – Public Service Comm. Hearing, MPSC – Video/Cable Complaint, Hurontown Ditch Project Publication, MI Dept. of Treasury -Primary Reimbursement/State Revenue Sharing, MI. Railroad Association, MI Rural Water Association, MI PAR Plan News, MTU – Winter Carnival Donation.

Review Fire Departments: HTFD – 1 fire, one power line down, 2 car accidents

Review Assessor's Report: distributed

DPW Report – Kody Maki - Weekend On-Call DPW Rotational Access

Auction of old equipment. – several items listed in Merrill WI.

Repairing /replacing water and sewer lines.

CDL Class – A motion was made by Ollila to pay for half for the class A CDL class for Kody Maki, seconded by Skewes. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.

Hooked up water/sewer for 2 homes on Maple Street

Trustees Reports/Updates: Fink thanked the board

Public Comments: A resident expressed concerns with engine braking on large trucks, she stated large trucks are using it going uphill to the quarry entrance on Superior Road.

Old Business:

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer Project – (11) Well Owners on M-26 – Water Meter Installation (Twp. Action for Non-Cooperative Landowners) DWAM Grant – Danielson
Anderson updated the board on the current sewer customers
A motion was made by Ollila to charge customers who refuse to hook up to the sewer system to be charged the base fee as well as the \$100.00 penalty, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.
- B. Need New B.O.R. Member – Chuck Van Karsen will be Leaving After Dec.Mtg. new elected board will decide on new member
- C. 5% Sewer and Water Rate Increase? Commercial Rate Increase for New Year? Fink made a motion to include the commercial rates in the 5% increase every January 1st, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Fink, Ollila, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: Anderson, Petersen
- D. Personnel Manual Acceptance & Wage Recommendations from Committee. A motion was made by Ollila to approve the new personnel manual, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.
- E. Gaffney Road –there is a grant to pave Gaffney Road. A motion was made by Ollila to sign the agreement with the Houghton County Road Commission to apply for the funds, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.
- F. Fire Truck bids closed on 11/7

New Business:

- A. Sewer Main Extension – Bryan Kangas – Correct Problems for (2) Residents. A motion was made by Fink to pay Bryan Kangas \$2680.00, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.
- B. AT&T METRO Act Permit Extension – Signature Needed.
- C. MI Dept. of Licensing – Boiler Violation – Aire Care Will Do Inspection.
- D. New Board Member Information – MTA Binders – for new Trustees and Supervisor.
- E. Personnel rates of pay – A motion was made by Ollila to increase the rate of pay for the cemetery staff to \$18.00 per hour, the cemetery sexton to \$22.00, the deputies to \$20.00 beginning the first full pay period in January, seconded by Smith. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.

Public Comment: none

Meetings:


- A. October 22, 2024 – Personnel Comm. Mtg. – Twp. Office.

- B. October 28, 2024 – Ryan Awendt (City DPW) – Edwards Street Sewer Meter.
- C. November 18, 2024 – 2025 Budget Meeting – Twp. Office.


Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM

Public Attendance:

Roy Britz
Ted Sohlden
Marty Raffaelli
Chris Holmes – UPEA
Jason Colombe
Dale Belanger - HTFD
Sally Santeford

X 

Brandon Scholie
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes
Clerk